

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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H: KFOLGER (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

USINT BAGHDAD BY POUCH

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AMEMBASSY SANAA BY POUCH

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING
APRIL 12, 1973:

QUOTE: MR. BRAY: I WOULD LIKE TO COME BACK ONCE MORE TO
REMARKS I HAVE MADE IN THE LAST TWO DAYS WITH RESPECT TO
THE FALSE ALLEGATIONS THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS SOMEHOW
INVOLVED IN THE ISRAELI RAID INTO LEBANON, SINCE IT SEEMS
OBVIOUS THAT THE FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT, THE PLO WITH THE BSO,
ARE SYSTEMATICALLY REPEATING THESE LIES THROUGH THE VARIOUS
MEDIA AVAILABLE TO THEM IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- INCLUDING A
SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF THESE SEMI- CLANDESTINE VOICE OF
PALESTINE RADIOS IN THE AREA. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT
IN THOSE CASES THE AMERICAN DENIAL OF ANY INVOLVEMENT IN
THAT RAID IS NOT BEING CARRIED.

NOW, IT SEEMS TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT THAT WHAT IS
UNFOLDING HERE IS A DELIBERATE ANTI AMERICAN CAMPAIGN BY
THE FEDAYEEN, USING THE OLD TECHNIQUE OF THE " BIG LIE"--
THAT IS, IF YOU MAKE THE LIE BIG ENOUGH AND REPEAT IT OFTEN
ENOUGH, EVENTUALLY PEOPLE COME TO BELIEVE IT.
ENOUGH, EVENTUALLY PEOPLE COME TO BELIEVE IT.
E HOPE THAT BEFORE GIVING CREDENCE TO THESE IRRESPONSIBLE
WE HOPE THAT BEFORE GIVING CREDENCE TO THESE IRRESPONSIBLE
AND COMPLETELY FALSE CHARGES, OTHERS IN THE AREA WOULD
REFLECT NOT ONLY ON OUR REPEATED, UNEQUIVOCAL DENIALS BUT
ALSO ON THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF LENDING FURTHER
CREDENCE TO THE OBVIOUS LIES.

THERE OUGHT TO BE A LARGE NUMBER OF CONCERNED PEOPLE IN THE
MIDDLE EAST WHO WILL RECALL THE EQUALLY BASELESS CHARGES
IN 1967 WHICH, WHILE THEY WERE WIDELY BELIEVED AT THE TIME,
CAME TO BE SEEN, IF BELATEDLY, AS THE FALSEHOODS THEY WERE
-- NOT, UNFORTUNATELY, UNTIL A NUMBER OF ACTIONS WERE
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TAKEN BASED ON THE INITIAL BELIEF.

NOW, I HAVE HAD REFERENCE HERE SO FAR TO FEDAYEEN, PLO
BROADCASTS AND STATEMENTS. I MUST SAY, TO TAKE THAT A
STEP FURTHER, THAT WE ARE DISTRESSED TO FIND OTHER MEDIA
IN THE AREA, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF OFFICIAL OUTLETS,
GIVING INDIRECT BUT PROBABLY EFFECTIVE COVERAGE OF THESE
FALSEHOODS AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTING FURTHER TO THEIR
CREDENCE IN THE AREA.

IT IS PARTICULARLY REPUGNANT TO ALL RESPONSIBLE MEN TO FIND THESE CLANDESTINE OUTLETS IN SOME CASES CALLING FOR ATTACKS ON AMERICANS OR AMERICAN OFFICIALS OR AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS. I WOULD NOTE TODAY, AS I HAVE NOTED FOR YOU BEFORE, IT IS A WIDELY ACCEPTED STANDARD IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROTECTION OF VISITING OFFICIALS AND THEIR PROPERTIES.

Q. HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MADE ANY DIRECT APPROACHES TO GOVERNMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO CONVEY THESE SENTIMENTS?

A. IN SOME CASES I THINK THE ANSWER IS YES. THERE ARE OTHER ACTIONS IN TRAIN TO THAT EFFECT.

Q. YOU SAID YESTERDAY THAT YOU PROTESTED IN ALGIERS. DID YOU HAVE ANY ANSWER?

A. NO COMMENT.

Q. DID YOU PROTEST TO LIBYA YET? THAT WAS IN TRAIN.

A. YES, I JUST WILL LEAVE IT INDEFINITE FOR THE MOMENT TODAY.

Q. IS THE VOICE OF AMERICA MAKING ANY BROADCASTS TO COUNTER THE EFFECTS OF THIS?

A. I THINK THE ANSWER IS PROBABLY YES. I -- THE ANSWER IS YES.

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Q. YOU'VE EXPRESSED VERY SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT AMERICANS IN THE AREA, THE OFFICIALS, THE INSTALLATION, ETC. DOES YOUR CONCERN GO BEYOND THAT TO FEAR OF AN OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE PERHAPS CAPPING THIS SURGE OF EMOTIONS?

A. I'M NOT CERTAIN I TRACK.

Q. BETWEEN NATIONS.

A. I SEE. NO, LET ME SAY, ON BACKGROUND, THAT OUR IMMEDIATE PREOCCUPATION IS WITH THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS AND THEIR AND OUR PROPERTIES.

Q. THE OTHER MEDIA TO WHICH YOU REFER WHICH HAS INDIRECTLY, AS YOU PUT IT, GIVEN CREDENCE TO THESE REPORTS BY THE FEDAYEEN RADIO, HAS THIS OTHER MEDIA ALSO PRINTED YOUR REACTIONS IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS?

A. NOT AS A GENERAL PROPOSITION.

Q. IF IT IS A WARNING, IT IS DIRECTED MOSTLY TO THE FEDAYEEN, AND I DON' T UNDERSTAND REALLY, I CAN' T BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE PHRASE " POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES" IF WE ARE SPEAKING TO THE FEDAYEEN. I MEAN, TO PUT IT A DIFFERENT WAY, COULD YOU STATE THAT POINT A LITTLE MORE CLEARLY FOR ME?

A. LET ME GO ON BACKGROUND TO DO THAT, IF I MAY. " WARN-ING" WAS ENDRE' S WORD.

Q. YES, BUT IT IS DIRECTED TO THE FEDAYEEN, MOST OF WHAT YOU SAID IS DIRECTED TO THE FEDAYEEN, AS I READ IT.

A. NOT NECESSARILY.

Q. WELL, ALL RIGHT. ANY CLARIFICATION, WE APPRECIATE IT.

A. ON BACKGROUND, OBVIOUSLY I INTENDED YOU TO NOTE MY STATEMENT OF DISTRESS THAT OTHER MEDIA, AND INCLUDING OFFICIAL MEDIA, BY PICKING UP THE BIG LIE, WHATEVER THE SOURCE THEY GIVE TO IT, GIVE IT A FURTHER RIDE IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PUBLIC MIND IN THE AREA. THERE FOLLOWS FROM THAT OUR VERY STRONG HOPE THAT THAT PRACTICE WILL STOP AND STOP IMMEDIATELY.

Q. HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS BEEN PUT INTO EFFECT BEYOND THOSE THAT ALREADY WERE IN EFFECT AFTER THE RECENT INCIDENT, REGARDING AMERICAN PERSONNEL, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD?

A. THE ANSWER IS YES.

Q. IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR REFERENCES TO THE CONCERN OVER THE SAFETY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, ARE THERE ANY STEPS BEING TAKEN TO PROTECT THESE AMERICANS?

A. WE HAVE HAD IN THE RECENT PAST OCCASION, FOLLOWING ON THE EVENTS IN KHARTOUM IN PARTICULAR, TO STEP UP THE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WHICH SURROUND OUR OWN PERSONNEL IN THE AREA AND ELSEWHERE. AND I PUT SOME STRESS ON THAT " AROUND THE WORLD." AND OBVIOUSLY WE ARE GIVING THIS PARTICULAR ATTENTION THESE DAYS.

Q. DOES THIS EXTEND TO PRIVATE CITIZENS TOO, OIL COMPANY PEOPLE AND THINGS OF THAT SORT?

A. THE HARD FACT IS THAT THERE ARE PRETTY SERIOUS PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS ON THE AMOUNT OF SECURITY AVAILABLE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

Q. IS THE SIXTH FLEET BEING USED IN ANY WAY IN CONNECTION WITH THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. OUR FOCUS WITH RESPECT TO THE SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE IS RATHER THEIR DIRECT PHYSICAL -- LET ME DO THIS ON BACK-GROUND -- THEIR DIRECT PHYSICAL SAFETY ON THE GROUND.

Q. THE NEXT QUESTION WHICH ALWAYS COMES UP IN THIS SCENARIO THROUGH WHICH WE GO OCCASIONALLY IS, " DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE UNDER CONSIDERATION THE POSSIBILITY OF WARNING AMERICANS AGAINST TRAVEL IN THE AREA?" THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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USUALLY BOTHERS THE EGYPTIAN TRADE TOURIST BUREAU.

DELETE MY REFERENCE TO THE EGYPTIAN TOURIST BUREAU, BUT THAT IS THE NEXT QUESTION THAT COMES UP. IF YOU WANT TO " NO COMMENT" IT, OKAY, BUT IF IT'S BAD OUT THERE ARE YOU TELLING PEOPLE TO TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION BEFORE THEY TRAVEL?

A. YES, WE HAVE THAT UNDER CONSIDERATION.

Q. ARE YOU ALSO CONSIDERING ASKING NONESSENTIAL PERSONNEL TO LEAVE?

A. NO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING BEYOND THE PUBLIC RADIO BROADCASTS AND NEWSPAPER PROPAGANDA THAT YOU REFERRED TO THAT WOULD INDICATE THAT AMERICAN LIVES MAY BE IN DANGER IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD?

A. OUR CONCERN STEMS PRIMARILY FROM THE PUBLIC REFERENCES.

Q. MAY I ASK ONE MORE QUESTION WITH REFERENCE TO THE MIDDLE EAST? THERE WAS A REPORT THIS MORNING THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HALTED LAND PURCHASES BY ISRAELIS ON THE WEST BANK ON THE " RECOMMENDATION", SHALL WE SAY, OF AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL. IS THIS CORRECT? WOULD YOU COMMENT ON IT?

A. WELL, I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO EXTEMPORIZE ON THE CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE THE ISRAELI CABINET AS IT MADE THIS DECISION. AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THAT QUESTION MORE PROPERLY BELONGS TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FOR RESPONSE.

IF WHAT YOU' RE ASKING ME IS WHETHER ASSISTANT SECRETARY
SISCO WAS IN TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IN THIS
MATTER, THE ANSWER IS YES.

Q. DOES THE REPORT THAT WE' RE ALL REFERRING TO ACCURATELY
PORTRAY THE NATURE OF THIS INTERVENTION, THE TONE OF THE
INTERVENTION?
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A. I WON' T COMMENT ON THE NATURE, THE SUBSTANCE, OF THE
DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER. WHAT I HAVE TO SAY IN RESPONSE
TO THE FIRST QUESTION IS THAT SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS MAKE
THEIR OWN DECISIONS; SOMETIMES HAVING BENEFITTED, HAVING
THE BENEFIT OF THE VIEWS OF OTHERS.

Q. BUT CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT' S
POSITION IS, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHAT SISCO TOLD THE ISRAELI
AMBASSADOR, ON THE ISRAELI ACQUISITION OF LAND IN THE
AREA?

A. I CAN RECALL THREE OR FOUR OCCASIONS ON WHICH I
PARSED THAT ONE IN SOME DETAIL HERE. IT' S BACK ON THE
RECORD. END QUOTE. ROGERS

NOTE BY OC/ T: POUCHED BAGHDAD AND SANAA

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